

# Preface

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The Dossier entitled “**(Audio)Visions: photography, cinema and memory**” is edited by **Thomas Wiedemann** on behalf of the **Visual Culture Working Group (VIC)** of the **International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR)**. This preeminent worldwide professional organization in the field of communication studies promotes media and communication research throughout the globe, addressing socio-political, technological, policy and cultural processes at all levels. Its members include individual scholars and academic institutions from over 100 countries across all continents and its annual conferences regularly gather participants of more than 70 countries with diverse geographical and cultural origins. That being said, within **IAMCR**, **VIC** focuses on artistic, cultural, socio-cultural and technological studies in visual media and communication—pictures and photography, respectively, but also cinema, audiovisuals and arts—from a critical view point that might enhance the international field of communication studies. In this spirit, after the **IAMCR Conference 2019** held in Madrid, Spain, the idea arose to publish some of the research papers by members of the working group that dealt with the themes of the dossier. Hence, first of all, **VIC** would like to thank **Eduardo Vicente** and the editorial board of **Novos Olhares** for making this idea possible and accepting such proposal.

After all, referring in particular to the national background of its authors, the dossier turned out to be an homage to Spain, where the Association’s Conference took place last year, and to Finland, host country of this year’s **IAMCR Conference**. More precisely, the **IAMCR Conference 2020** was initially planned to be held in Beijing, China. However, due to COVID-19, it then was transferred to the city of Tampere, Finland, and finally became a virtual event given the current situation in the world.

In sum, the dossier includes 12 research articles that are original works of scholars (PhD and PhD candidates) coming from eight different countries in Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America (Spain and Finland, but also Austria, Brazil, China, Sweden, United States and Venezuela). Thereby, we are especially proud to announce two guests of honor: **Josep Maria Català Domènech**, Professor Emeritus at the Universidad Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain, and expert in audiovisual communication of many years’ standing, and **Kaarle Nordenstreng**, Professor Emeritus at Tampere University and one of the most outstanding figures of **IAMCR** who also offered his university as the host of the association’s conference this year when China had no more conditions because of the pandemic.

For almost two decades, communication scholars aware of the rising significance of visual representations have analyzed the conditions of the formation of visual media content including film, audiovisual, television and multimedia, as well as such media content's semantic power and social dynamics, as part of the "pictorial turn" in the social sciences in general. Their fruitful insights not only diversify the field of communication studies. What is more, they easily make us believe in the power of visual media to initiate processes of socialization and integration, contribute to a collective "story about the self," promote a specific culture of memory and reproduce or modify social structures. In particular, studies about the cultural practices of communities in different world regions can contribute to the research of identity, analyses of the evolution of visual and digital media are relevant to emphasize history and memory issues, and research on visual media helps us to understand many perspectives that represent our contemporary world, given the pervasiveness of audiovisual content into daily life.

The articles assembled in this **Novos Olhares** dossier are sensitive to such concerns. To start with our two guests of honor, on the one hand, **Josep Maria Català Domènech**, in his programmatic text *Modos de ver, formas de pensar: Una genealogía de la posvisión (Ways to see, ways to think: A genealogy of post-vision)*, sketches the historical evolution of human vision that culminates in what he calls "post-vision." More precisely, in light of ongoing digitization processes, he detects the transition from traditional "seeing is believing" to an expressive "seeing is thinking," as already predetermined by Gilles Deleuze. On the other hand, the text *The challenge of the BRICS countries: Overview of an international project* by **Kaarle Nordenstreng** reports on the agenda of an international research project that critically examines the theoretical concepts of media system, the role of media and journalists in democracies as well as the freedom and independence of media, and empirically investigates citizen participation in and through media as well as professional orientation and education of journalists, both by focusing on the BRICS countries and placing them within a global context. Although connections to visual media remain implicit, Kaarle Nordenstreng's contribution particularly reflects the international spirit of **IAMCR** and might stimulate comparative research projects in the area of visual culture, too.

Regarding further subthemes within the dossier's general framework of (audio)visions, in a first place, four articles deal with photography. The text *Prosumidores visuales: La fotografía incómoda en el contexto venezolano (2014-2018) (Visual prosumers: The uncomfortable photography in the Venezuelan context [2014-2018])* by **Johanna Pérez Daza**, PhD, Researcher at the Communication Research Center at the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, Venezuela, focuses on the impact of image "prosumers" during the recent anti-government protests in Venezuela and reflects their conflictual confrontation with power as well as their impact and relevance as mass disseminators of sometimes violent, outrageous and disturbing visual media content. In contrast to that, **Maria Nilsson**, PhD, Associate Professor at the Department of Media Studies at Stockholm University, Sweden, and **Ansgar Fellendorf**, PhD candidate in Environmental Governance at the University of Life Sciences Vienna, Austria, present two studies that draw on image and visual discourse analyses. Whereas the text *Visualizing the experience of flight: Photojournalistic portraits and refugee migration* by Maria Nilsson explores how photojournalism addresses refugee migration in Sweden and identifies not only prevalent visualizations (children and forced migration), but also several visual strategies such as humanitarian aesthetic, formality as a storytelling tool and the tension between showing and shielding young victims of trauma, Ansgar Fellendorf's contribution *Shifting surface: Satellite imagery of the Arctic sea ice and climate change*

*discourse* reveals that the satellite images provided by the “hegemons” NSIDC and NASA shape the visual construction of climate change in a specific way, supporting environmental citizenship and global responsibility instead of threat discourses. Additionally, linked to that, the text *Unveiling unseen climate practices on Instagram* by **Niina Uusitalo**, Postdoctoral researcher at the Faculty of Information Technology and Communication Sciences at Tampere University, too, analyzes the textual and visual content of Finnish Instagram accounts focusing on environmental and ecological issues, and argues for a broader visualization of climate practices in the media in general.

In a second place, five articles of the dossier address cinema and/or connections between the film medium, collective memory and change. The text *Theatre, painting and visual hybridizations in two audiovisual productions* by **César Biégas Faquin**, Master in Communication and Languages from the University Tuiuti do Paraná in Curitiba, Brazil, and **Denize Araujo**, PhD, Professor at the University Tuiuti do Paraná and Head of **VIC**, analyzes the movies *Dogville* (2003) and *Loving Vincent* (2017) as cases in point to discuss processes of dialogism, polyphony, hybridization, intermediality, intertextuality and memory—obviously, the latter especially refers to *Loving Vincent’s* homage to van Gogh. In addition to that, the text *Shanghai gangster films and the politics of change: A study of “Lord of the East China Sea” (1993) and “The Last Tycoon” (2012)* by **Tatu Laukkanen**, PhD, affiliated with the Faculty of Information Technology and Communication Sciences at Tampere University again, discusses ideological differences between two films from Hong Kong and China that are based on the life of Shanghai’s famous gangster Du Yuesheng, by focusing in particular on the representation of social class and the subject, the depiction of migration, immigration and nationalism, and paying special attention to connections between Chinese and world cinema. Furthermore, in her text *Analysis on the value of “cultivation” documentary and social memory*, **Weiting Hsiao**, PhD candidate in Film and Communication Research at Tsinghua University in Beijing, is concerned about long-term documentary film projects such as the *Up* series. More precisely, she considers them as chronicles of the time and explores their relationships with history and social change as well as their cultivation value. Beyond that, in his text *Cine familiar y emigración: Imagen, reconstrucción y memoria (Family cinema and emigration: Image, reconstruction and memory)*, **Fernando Redondo Neira**, PhD, Professor at the University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain, deals with amateur movies and their potential to manage family memory and reconstruct an intimate and personal past, which he exemplifies by referring to Patricia Zimmerman and focusing on audiovisual material that addresses Spanish emigration during the second half of the 20th century. Finally, for its part, the text *Algorithmic cinema and collective memory* by **Jesse Drew**, PhD, and **Glenda Drew**, MA, both Professors at the University of California in Davis, United States, presents the “Pixeldust project.” This is a contributory and interactive video, audio, and text engine that, according to the authors, blends the aesthetics and visual power of cinema with the flexibility and mutability of computer programming and can be used for a wide range of exhibition forms, taking, for example, photographic portraits of inspirational people as a starting point and facilitating their access to collective memory.

In a third place, the dossier finally includes another article that discusses phenomena and implications of our contemporary (audio)visual culture. More precisely, in her text *Cultura visual y música popular: El videoclip en la nueva ecología de los medios (Visual culture and popular music: Music video in new media ecology)*, **Ana Sedeño-Valdellós**, PhD, Lecturer at the Department of Audiovisual Communication and Advertising at the University of Málaga, Spain, draws on the perspective of media ecology and argues that, due to their structuring impact, music videos have become a point of reference and the

central format of nowadays audiovisual culture, regarding, in particular, aspects such as duration, composition of material, and promotional components.

This short panorama already illustrates that, of course, there are more intertextual links than those points in common considered as crucial for the dossier's subtitle ("photography, cinema and memory"). In particular, conflicts and crises as well as civic empowerment or engagement are recurring topics. Furthermore, almost all articles highlight aesthetic and technological aspects and many authors share a concern with recipients or user interactions. Regarding methods, all texts that present empirical studies are based on qualitative research designs.

As indicated, four of the dossier's texts are written in Spanish (with additional titles, abstracts, keywords and bio information in English), considering that the dossier includes three authors from Spain and one from Venezuela. The official launch of the dossier will be during **VIC** Online Session at the **IAMCR** Conference 2020, 12-16 July. Many thanks to all authors for their insightful texts.